

# PLAIN TALKS

JUNE  
1980





# MAIL BOX

## THE COVER

Gene Russell, a 21-year GSU veteran, snapped this picture of Louisiana power plant firefighters last year during one of two training sessions at the Louisiana State University fire training grounds.

According to Russell, a safety representative, all firefighters, whose ranks include one female employee, are volunteers who meet certain criteria. Since their official jobs with the company could be anything from electrician to storekeeper to equipment operator, they must be able to respond to alarms and attend training. They must also have five years' service with GSU, as well as two years' power plant experience.

Read more about these highly trained firefighters on page 5.

Russell reports that he shot the cover photo with a Hanimex 35 mm camera.



Gulf States Utilities  
Western Louisiana District

Sirs:

We would like to extend our sincere thanks and appreciation to all Gulf States' utility men who worked so hard and such long, tiring hours to restore power in the Ventress area. A special thanks also goes to the families of these men for being so patient and understanding.

Earl Mix and family  
Ventress, Louisiana

**Editor's note:** This letter was in regard to a May 16 storm in Louisiana's western district of the Lake Charles Division. Ventress is near New Roads.

Employees  
Gulf States Utilities  
Beaumont, Texas

Dear Employees:

One hundred and nine Gulf States Utilities' downtown employees donated lifesaving blood during the worst month of the year for us. Each pint was badly needed and used quickly and we appreciated each one.

You were enthusiastic and cooperative and we enjoyed working with each of you. It is good to know we have people like you to depend on to help us help save lives.

All employees and their immediate families are covered by Blood Plan 40. If you or a member of your family (spouse and all unmarried dependent children under the age of 22) use blood, please contact your personnel office. We will then issue the proper credits to be applied to the patient's hospital bill.

Thank you again for caring.

Sincerely,  
Carol Weatherall  
Recruiting Coordinator  
Blood Center of Southeast  
Texas, Inc.

**Editor's note:** Ms. Weatherall wrote separate letters to company officers Norman Lee and Bill Barksdale commending employee Mary Lou LaRocca for her help in organizing the January blood drive and recruiting donors.

Gerald Condon  
Gulf States Utilities  
Beaumont, Texas

Dear Mr. Condon:

I would like to express my appreciation for the informative tour on the construction of the new Gulf States Utilities building. The students enjoyed it and now are more knowledgeable about construction techniques.

Thank you for sharing your knowledge with us and for your help with the real estate program at Lamar University.

Sincerely yours,  
Alice W. Cater  
Real Estate Coordinator  
Lamar University

## PLAIN TALKS

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### Director-Employee Information/Media Services

Kim McMurray

#### Editor:

Susan Huff Gilley

#### Correspondents:

Adelaide Bankston

Bonnie Duval

Connie Herford

Bobby Hilborn

Les Jones

Earl Landry

Lydia Mitchell

Edith Patterson

Anna Raymond

Rose Reeves

D. W. Rutherford

Suzonne Taylor

Shivaun Tessier

David Thornhill

Doris Wallace

George Weathers

Nina Wiley

Ritchie Yott



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## Reasons given for demolishing old power plant

After a year of futile searching for a way to save it, GSU officials decided the abandoned Tevis Street power plant in downtown Beaumont would have to be demolished.

"We went to great lengths to try to save the old building," explained Board Chairman Don Crawford. "In the final analysis, there was no one willing or able to commit the resources that would be required to save and renovate the structure."

Architects had estimated it would take more than \$2.4 million to make the 78-year-old building safe and usable. The structure, which served as a generating plant from 1902 until the mid-1930s, had been used as a company storage facility in recent years.



In the picture above, Jack Worthy, vice president of general services, displays a piece of wood from the ceiling of the old structure, showing how rotten it was.

In the spring of 1979, GSU sent letters to about 15 Texas foundations soliciting funds to help convert the old plant into an Edison Energy Hall that would serve as a museum and community meeting facility.

"We did not think it would be appropriate for our customers to finance such a project," Crawford

said, "so we approached the foundations we thought might have an interest."

The results were disappointing. Only one foundation responded positively, offering to donate \$5,000 if the remaining money could be raised.

Company officials then tried another approach. Since the new corporate headquarters is being built next to the old plant, the architects were asked to see if the existing structure could be utilized as a way to reduce construction costs on the office tower.

Detailed studies showed that it would cost more than \$2.4 million to be able to use the structure safely.

Officials were also unsuccessful in seeking funds from state and federal sources.

"We had a sentimental attachment to the old power plant since it dates back to the early days of the company that later became GSU," Crawford said. "We tried to save it, but to no avail. In the end, sentiment had to give way to realism."

## CONTACT leader explains success of program

The Employee CONTACT Program (ECP) has enabled CONTACT Leader Joyce Viltz of Beaumont "to learn more about the company."

Before ECP went into effect in the fall of 1977, Mrs. Viltz admits she knew little about GSU beyond "typing purchase orders and reports."

Although CONTACT IX, which deals with the company's operational costs, marks only the third round of meetings for Mrs. Viltz to conduct as a leader, the General Accounting clerk had attended all but one of the previous CONTACT information meetings offered in her work area.

She has been with the company 5½ years.

Mrs. Viltz usually leads about four sessions made up of about 15 persons apiece during each new CONTACT program.

She says her experiences as a leader have been rewarding, but concedes she was "a little apprehensive" right after accepting the position.

"I'm a little bit more at ease now," she says, adding, "This way, I'm learning about other aspects of the company."

Mrs. Viltz, who makes her home in Port Arthur with her husband, Nelson, and her 12-year-old daughter Shawn, joined other CONTACT leaders from across the company in mid-May for another leader training session.

During the leader training sessions, participants hear from company specialists in the topic area, and also meet with representatives from Ken W. Huskey Associates, a California-based communications firm that works with Gulf States to teach employees the best techniques for presenting material to co-workers. Portions of the ECP sessions are even video taped to allow participants to evaluate their work.



The accompanying picture shows veteran CONTACT leader Ed Brawner of Lake Charles during the training session at Beaumont's Red Carpet Inn.

According to Rick Harvin, the public affairs representative who coordinates ECP, at least two more programs are tentatively scheduled for August and October.



# Company offers sophisticated training for power plant firefighters

Volunteer firefighters at GSU power plants offer "the first line of defense" against a blaze, and Safety Representative Gene Russell believes most of them are trained to do a good job.

Except for a few Texas power plant firefighters, most members of power plant fire brigades have undergone extensive training either at Texas A&M or at Louisiana State University.

LSU and A&M have almost everything—classrooms, training grounds and expert instructors, says Russell.

Although the company has had in-plant firefighting teams for years, they were not professionally trained until last year.

"We felt like if they were trained, they could supplement the local fire departments," Russell explained.

Russell helped develop the training idea, which was conceived by former training employee Ron Lamb.

Members of the brigades are volunteers who have met certain criteria. They must be able to answer alarms, attend training, have at least two years' power plant experience, as well as five years' service with the company, and should be certified in first aid or cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR).

The LSU training sessions—which cost about \$2,000 apiece, or about \$100 for each of the 20 persons participating in each session—begin with an entire day of classroom instruction. The second day is skills training, when participants actually put out fires with extinguishers, hoses and foam. They also learn to use Scott air packs when they have to enter a smoke-filled trailer. The company has purchased a complete set of firefighting equipment for each fire brigade member.

The structure of the fire brigade begins with the plant superintendent at the top, followed by the fire brigade chief and the assistant fire brigade chief.

Others in the brigade include:

- Two persons on the attack hose.
- Two persons on the backup hose.
- One person as a messenger.
- One person as the hydrant tender.

Gulf States has not had a major

fire, and Russell says he hopes the good record continues.

But if the company were to suffer a major blaze, he predicts that it would take place during the day "because such a variety of jobs are going on."

Louisiana Station's fire brigade participates in a "mutual aid" plan that enables Baton Rouge area industries to support each other in the event of a major fire.

## Power plant firefighters

### Nelson Station:

G.L. Andrus  
R.L. Bagwell  
J.S. Burleigh  
C.E. Chambers  
C.W. Doucet  
K.W. Ferrell  
S.P. Fruge  
Jean Hebert  
J.A. Landry  
C.L. Lejeune  
H.L. Ney  
A.M. Royer  
M. Thibodeaux  
C.K. Welch

### Willow Glen Station:

Dale Arbour  
Ray Everette  
J.T. Graves  
Lanny Harris  
Terry Hernandez  
Ken McCullough  
S. Raiford  
Sam Raney  
James Raybourn  
G. Schneider  
Jack Stewart  
Steven Wagner  
S. Wheat  
Leroyal Wilson

### Neches Station:

Milton L. Ballard  
Victor H. Bradley  
James M. England  
Earl Landry  
Robert Lowrey  
Orie S. Richardson  
Edward Stewart  
John Winger

### Sabine Station:

James Braus  
Wayne Darcey  
Darlene Faires  
Earl Garner  
Floyd Hebert  
Roy Hocker  
K.R. Hoffpauir  
John Knoden  
Manuel Montalvo  
William Moore  
Arthur Wolf

### Louisiana Station:

Gene Andre  
David Boyd  
Wayne Desselle  
Gerald Duplechin  
Tom Engles  
Larry Fontenot  
Reubin Gourley  
Jimmy Graves  
James Gremillion  
Wayne Huff  
David Netherland  
Alonzo Sandifer  
Ben Williams

### Lewis Creek:

J.H. Dix  
W.E. Dodd  
W.B. Linnehan  
D.W. Rutherford



# GSU forester tries to work with Mother Nature

by Susan Gilley

Where does a forester go when he doesn't want to work for a forest service or for a timber company?

Phil Waller's circuitous career path took him to landscaping and tree-trimming positions, then a Soil Conservation Service position, before landing him with Gulf States.

Waller describes his work as the company's sole forester as "an extremely large challenge."

Operating out of the System Operations Department, Waller acts as a consultant for the whole system on right of way vegetation management programs.

His goal, he says, is to "work with Mother Nature, to use plant succession" that will eventually "manipulate (vegetation growth) so it will stay low level."

Attainment of that goal, he explains, will save the company money since rights of way will require less maintenance and clearing.

Waller reveals that it's really "not all that unusual" for a utility to have a forester on its staff, although he is the first for GSU.

A 1976 forestry graduate of Stephen F. Austin, the 25-year-old Beaumont resident says he followed in the footsteps of an older brother who also is a forestry graduate of the same school. Unlike his brother, who works for the U.S. Forest Service, however, Waller majored in forest management and recreation because he knew he "didn't want to work for a timber company where I wouldn't always have the decision to manage a tract of land."

At one time, he worked for Conroe's Blume Tree Services, which does some tree trimming for GSU. During the 2½ years before he reported to GSU last October, he worked with the Soil Conservation Service in Silsbee.



Even though he enjoyed working with farmers and ranchers, Waller says, "I kind of got in a rut."

And Waller does have a lot to keep him busy with GSU.

The company has about 4,000 miles of transmission lines and about 17,000 miles of distribution lines—and every bit of it has right of way that must be managed.

"Transmission lines are usually easier to stabilize—you have more alternatives," he comments.

While Waller is able to make several vegetation management suggestions—for instance, he might suggest chemical control in certain situations—the final deci-

sion on what will be done is up to a particular division's Transmission and Distribution Department.

Waller, who finds himself out of his Beaumont office "about 70 percent of the time," says the company could eventually "use a forester in every division."

An immediate goal he has is to coordinate the tree-trimming activities in each division, which are currently handled "by a lot of contractors."



# Silsbee youth, undaunted by wheelchair, wins "most spirited" award

David Sheffield has been described as an avid sports fan who also happens to be a proficient ham radio operator and a National Honor Society student—a description that could probably fit dozens of other 17-year-olds.

Sheffield, however, has been wheelchair-bound for the past five years. His father is Northern District Superintendent Robert A. Sheffield of Silsbee.

Undaunted by his circumstances, the slender teenager made the most of his years at Silsbee High School, recently ending his senior year as the recipient of the "Senior Class Favorite" and "Most Spirited" awards.

Just as his classmates appreciated Sheffield's qualities, he had praise for the school. "Silsbee's such a great place," he enthused. "I've never come to a door without someone holding it open for me. Silsbee (High) is phenomenal—the teachers and the administration."

A newly-constructed ramp will remind students and faculty members of Sheffield's years at the school. Above the passageway is a sign labeling the area as "Sheffield's Hill," a marker put up by Principal Herbert Muckleroy in a spirit of fun.

Sheffield suffers from an unnamed muscular disease similar to muscular dystrophy.

According to his mother, the affliction differs from MD in that there appears to be hope for improvement. His condition now is "fairly stable," following corrective surgery that kept him in a body cast for nine months until this February. More surgery is scheduled for this summer, before he begins commuting to Lamar University this fall as an accounting major.

Not even the cast, which covered him from his chest to his hips, could prevent Sheffield from using the time to learn how to become a ham radio operator and keeping up



*Coach Woodard and Sheffield discuss football during a break in classes recently.*

with the Silsbee football and basketball teams.

Among his frequent visitors was Coach Charlie Woodard, one of Silsbee High's football coaches, who said the team "considers David a letterman."

Sheffield usually attended all games, traveling in his parents' specially-equipped van. He also sometimes used athletic facilities for physical therapy purposes.

Woodard, who explains Sheffield was once in his health class, comments, "David is such an inspiration. His attitude concerning his condition is remarkable—he's always got a smile."

Mrs. Sheffield concurs with that description, admitting, "David really takes it much better than we do as parents. It's something he's had to do to get on as normally as possible."

Sheffield's interests right now are focused on his radio set, which

has enabled him to make contact with a group of handicapped youths from "across the region." He talks to them every day and has even met some of them. An amateur radio operator in an advanced class, Sheffield's number is KB5UY.

The group is working now to establish a Sky Warn system in cooperation with the National Weather Service, he reveals.

According to Woodard, whose sister is GSUer Virginia Collins of Silsbee, Sheffield has "really done more than he's received."

Perhaps that is because, as his mother explains, "He's independent—he doesn't want any more help than he has to have."

On graduation night, the Silsbee Municipal Police Association presented two \$500 scholarships to young Sheffield.



# Orgain retirement marks end of longtime family alliance with GSU

by Lee Stem



*B.D. Orgain pauses for a moment in downtown Beaumont, home of his law firm of Orgain, Bell and Tucker and corporate headquarters for Gulf States Utilities. Orgain recently decided not to seek re-election as an advisory director.*

When Benjamin D. Orgain retired as an advisory director on May 8, it not only marked the end of his 17-year relationship with Gulf States, but the closing of a 66-year era in which a member of the Orgain family had been associated with the company.

It all began in 1914 when his father—or Mr. Will, as he was called—began serving as a legal consultant to Gulf States' predecessor companies. He continued to do so following the company's incorporation in 1925 and served the company as a director for 23 years until he chose not to stand for re-election at the annual meeting held on May 9, 1963.

At that same meeting, B.D. succeeded his father as a director on the board. In 1975, the younger Orgain was named advisory director, and by 1980, he had completed nearly two decades of service to GSU.

"I guess you could say I've seen this company mature," says B.D. "I've seen it through the ravages of inflation and I've seen it handle the tremendous expansion of our use of electricity, as well as the influx of industrial plants in the area."

B.D. could aptly be described as a "lawyer's lawyer." The grandson and son of respected attorneys, he graduated with honors from the law school at the University of Texas in 1933 and later earned his

LLM from the Harvard Law School. Since that time, he's remained loyal to his alma mater by generously contributing his time and financial help to the university. In addition to serving on the Texas Development Board, he continues to serve as trustee of the Texas Law School Foundation and has served on both the Chancellor's Council and the Dean's Council.

"My father was a lawyer and I was always so sure he wanted me to be one, that I never really thought of being anything else," he reflects. "I remember my grandfather settled in Bastrop to practice law because he was so sure that it would outstrip Houston. My father didn't pay any attention to either one of those towns and settled in Beaumont because of Spindletop and I just followed in his footsteps."

Aside from his professional life, Orgain is probably best known for his hobby of birdwatching. He currently serves as president of the Texas Ornithological Society.

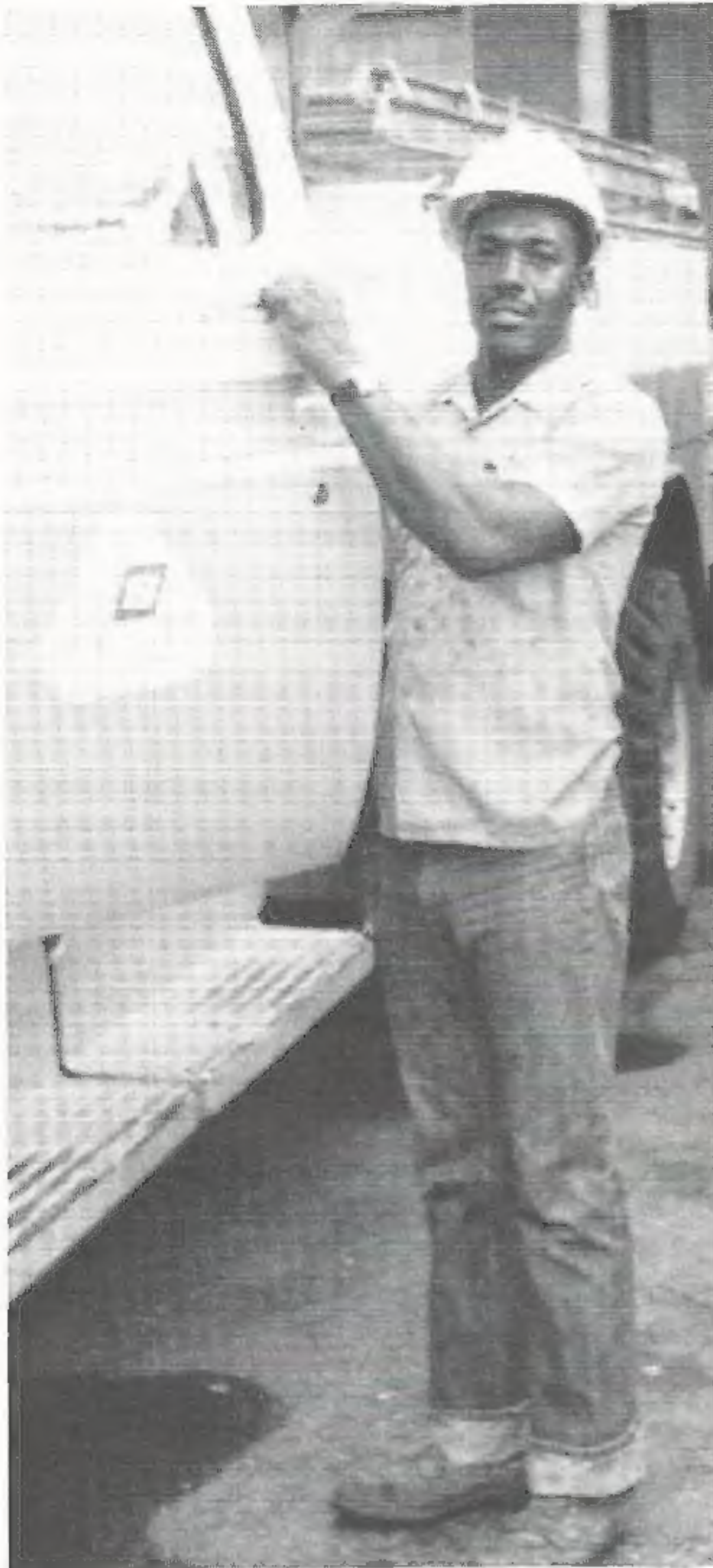
"My father was a great hunter," he notes. "He used to take me with him and when the game started getting scarce, I realized I only liked hunting because I liked nature and if you hunted to kill, you only enjoyed your game once."

Because of impaired vision, the former board member no longer participates in hunting, golfing, tennis or fishing, as he once did. As far as plans for the future, he reveals he will maintain his relationship with the law firm Orgain, Bell and Tucker, at least on a limited basis.

"You know," he comments, "old lawyers never die, they just sort of worry you to death."



# Beaumont employee maintains perfect attendance for 13 years



**L**ine Department employees have traditionally put in long, often tiring, hours.

But 13-year GSU employee Morris O. Jenkins has gone a step further—the Beaumont Division Line Department truckdriver has never missed a day of work for any reason since he was hired in January, 1967.

Although Jenkins, 39, began in a storeroom position, he has been a truckdriver for the past two years.

His normal workday runs from 7 a.m. until 3:30 p.m., but Jenkins concedes that he has put in "quite a bit of overtime" in recent months.

He attributes his excellent record to "my attitude" and good health and recalls that he was similarly devoted to his job when he worked in construction a couple of years before beginning his Gulf States' career.

Jenkins reveals that he and his wife, Lillian, have built a family life for their six children that involves "working together and doing things as a team."

Steadfastness may be a quality of their family life, too, since Jenkins notes that his youngsters—three

sons and three daughters ranging in age from 8 to 17—rarely miss a day of school. Jenkins said in May that his oldest son, 13-year-old Morris Jr., was well on his way to earning a perfect attendance award at Lincoln Middle School in Beaumont.

Jenkins notes that he was attracted to Gulf States because he favored the company's benefits over those offered by his construction job. Since transferring to the truckdriver's position, Jenkins admits to even greater job satisfaction. "I enjoy working with people," he explains.

Describing himself as "always active," Jenkins says he participates in activities at Lacy Temple Church of God in Christ and works with a Little League football team.

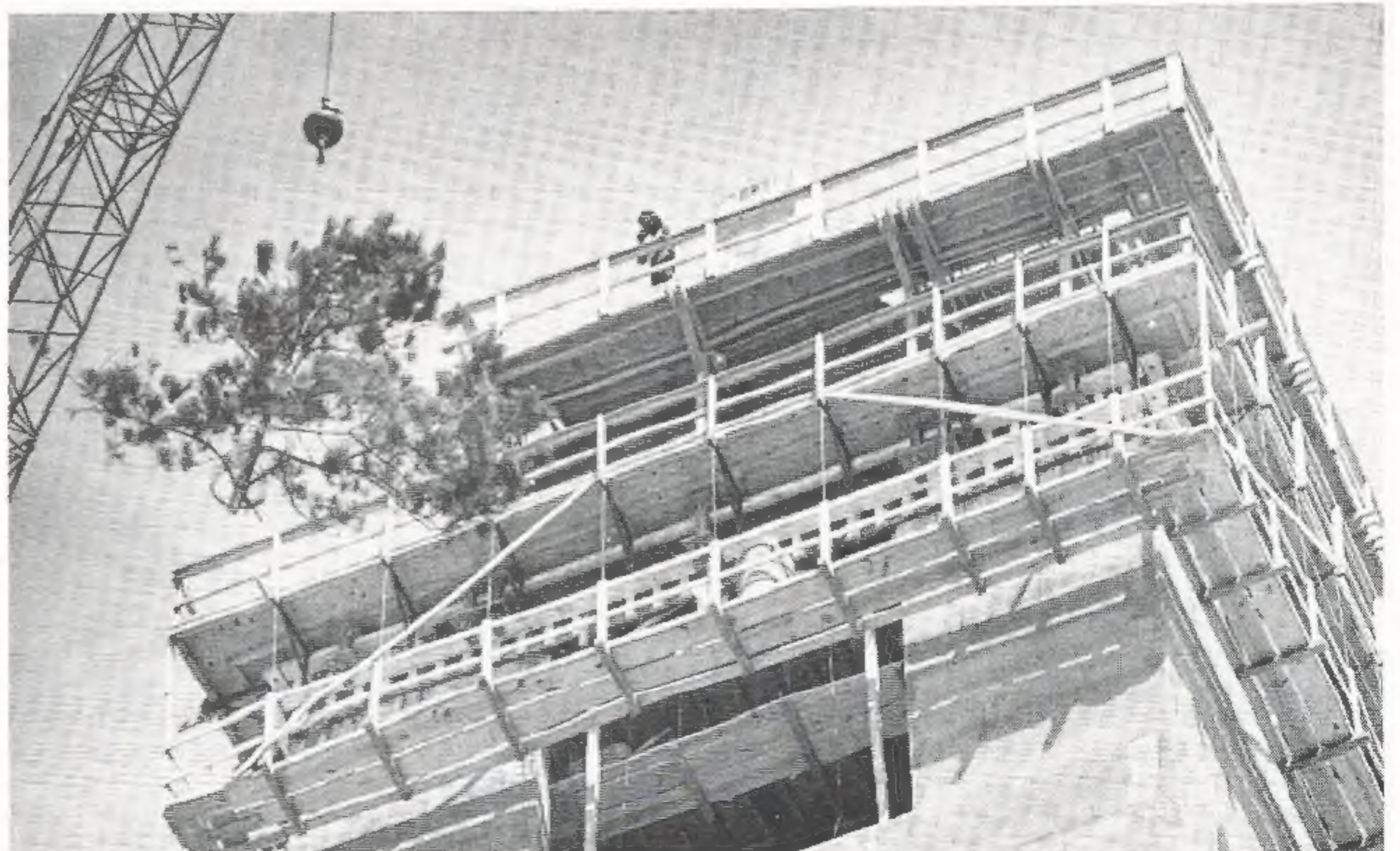
The Human Resources Department reports that Jenkins has maintained a perfect attendance record during his 13-year tenure with the company, but concedes that other employees may also have attained such records. Any employee who has done so is urged to notify Human Resources so that they, too, may be recognized.

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## New corporate headquarters begins to shape up

*Work on the company's new headquarters—Edison Plaza in downtown Beaumont—was 17 percent complete at the end of May, reports Jack Worthy, vice president-general services.*

*Occupancy of the facility is expected to take place by September, 1981.*





# GSU monitors the sunshine in Sunset

by Susan Gilley



*Jimmy Miranda reviews the plans for the "passive" solar home near Sunset.*

Just outside tiny Sunset, Louisiana, stands a newly-built home that almost seems to blend into the Acadian countryside.

In fact, builder Jimmy Miranda gave a lot of consideration to the exact geographic placement of the structure—much as the early Acadians did—to obtain the most benefit from the path of the sun.

But Miranda's efforts are considerably more extensive, since they reflect his philosophy that a builder has a moral responsibility "to be energy conscious."

The bearded young man, who operates Self-Reliance Homes in Lafayette, is finishing up construction of the "passive" solar home more than a year after he first put the idea to the drawing board.

Although the home features an attractive solarium, Miranda says it is considered "passive" because there is no mechanical equipment that would make it actively solar.

GSU has installed two meters in the home because the company is "interested in determining how electricity is used in this type of home," explains Virgil Fuselier of Consumer Services in Lafayette.

One meter will record only electricity used by the heat pump, which will provide supplemental heating and cooling for the home. That meter will help determine what percentage of the total consumption goes for heating and cooling.

"Perhaps we'll find a lot of consumption someplace else," says Fuselier, adding that the study is





aimed at showing "what's fact and what's fantasy about solar."

Eddie Belair of Consumer Services in Jennings has stayed in close contact with Miranda and his project in the past few months.

Even before the home was finished, Belair could ascertain that it would be an energy-saving structure. On a National Energy Watch (NEW) test sheet, the home scored 101 points out of a possible 133.

"And the form doesn't even have a place for solar—there are no bonus points for solar features!" Belair exclaims.

Built of wood and brick, with a highly reflective aluminum roof, the front of the residence has a solarium that faces due south. In winter, when surrounding trees lose their leaves, the glass gets direct sunlight. The heat rises through windows in the top of the solarium, then is pulled back down into the home for heating purposes by a fan located near the ceiling. The top of the ceiling is covered with one foot of insulation, Miranda says.

During the summer, however, the same orientation allows for cooling since the glass is shaded by leafy trees and the sun is at a higher arc.

"I know it will be much more comfortable (than an ordinary home without air conditioning)," says Miranda, "however, some people like to be refrigerated almost."

The solarium is constructed of old window panes obtained from a New Orleans antique dealer.

Referring to features like the solarium, extensive insulation, caulking and weatherstripping, as well as a plenum that funnels out hot air from the crawl space beneath the house, Miranda comments, "The package is there—people can keep adding to this throughout the year." Additional

useful features would include skylights and water bags for storing heat beneath the house, he suggests.

The three-bedroom, two bath, two-story house is now up for sale.

Miranda advises persons planning to build a home to place both the house and its windows so as to achieve "a balance—some view, some privacy, some light—but you have to be energy efficient, too."

While the Sunset site, with its pecan and oak trees, was ideal for Miranda's plans, he points out that others can design passive solar homes "without lots of landscaping."

*Eddie Belair of Jennings certified the structure as a NEW home.*





# This year's individual employee benefits statements feature new design

by Frank Loeffler

## Supervisor-Employee Benefits

Last month, employees received their latest individual employee benefits statements.

We took a new approach to explaining company benefits by attempting to describe how benefits would affect an employee under certain "events."

For instance, headings included:

- When there are medical expenses...
- If you become disabled...
- In case of death before retirement...
- When you retire...

This enabled the company to give an overall picture of what would happen with several benefits under such circumstances.

A part of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA) of 1974 asks companies to simplify individual benefits statements

that were sometimes hard to understand. Since benefits fall into the realm of insurance and legal matters, it is sometimes all too easy to imitate the often-confusing "legalese" used in those professions.

Redesigning and rewriting the statement was only the first step, however. Human Resources also plans to simplify the entire employee handbook and make them all the same size. Future individual employee benefits statements will probably be punched with three holes for insertion in the new-sized handbooks.

Since benefits change so frequently, this will make it easier for employees to keep more up-to-date information at their fingertips.

Some employees may have

noticed that portions of their statements dealing with Social Security benefits were marked as having "insufficient data."

Last year, payroll sent all employees a card to submit to the Social Security Administration so the company could have a record of their Social Security benefits. Those marked I/D simply failed to mail in their cards.

In short, this year's new statement reflects an attempt to try to give as much information as possible on just what employees are getting and how much.

For those of us who are several years away from retirement, many things (such as salary) will change. Because of this we have had to estimate some of the numbers used to figure retirement benefits.

## Company to hold first "Pick the Peak" contest

### Plain Talks' Pick the Peak Contest

#### Entry Form

Return to Plain Talks' Pick the Peak Contest  
6th floor, Goodhue Building, Beaumont

Your name \_\_\_\_\_

Department \_\_\_\_\_

Division \_\_\_\_\_

The peak load in 1980 will be \_\_\_\_\_ megawatts

The date the peak will occur will be \_\_\_\_\_

The temperature at peak will be about \_\_\_\_\_ degrees

The time the peak will occur will be \_\_\_\_\_

Deadline for entries is June 30, 1980





## GSU contributes grant to Lamar

Gulf States has contributed a grant of \$8,947.98 to Lamar University's secondary education department to host an Institute of Energy Education for classroom teachers in Southeast Texas.

Aubrey Sprawls, vice president of consumer services (shown on the right in the picture), made the grant available to Lamar through Dr. Richard E. Swain III, head of the secondary education department (center). Dr. P.B. Snyder (left) will direct the institute.

The 13-day institute, scheduled June 16 through July 2 at Lamar, will feature guest lecturers from the fields of energy, environment and economics. Activities will include on-site field trips to electrical generating plants.

The grant will underwrite the personnel, participant and instructional support costs of the institute.

Participants will be selected from practicing teachers of area schools whose instructional assignments include the sciences and social studies.

Each participant who successfully and fully completes the institute will receive six semester hours of graduate credit in education.

## New aerial units should show fuel savings

The Lake Charles system garage expects to save as much as 18 gallons of fuel per day as a result of having equipped all new gas-powered aerial units with auxiliary one-cylinder diesel engines for operating the boom and hydraulic tools.

According to a garage spokesman, the diesel would consume only 1½ gallons of diesel if it were operated constantly throughout the day, while the truck motor would use 20 or more gallons of gas under the same conditions.



The units are operated by direct manual control, eliminating the automatic throttle. It operates independently of the truck battery and charging system, which should more than double the life of the truck system.

Although only nine horsepower are needed to operate all truck equipment, the unit generates 11 horsepower at idling speed and can produce up to 13 horsepower.

In gas savings alone, the units are expected to pay for themselves in less than six months of operation.

by Edith Patterson  
Plain Talks Correspondent



## Conroe employees honor Jordan upon transfer

Conroe employees recently honored Roy Jordan, former section head, with a going-away party as he prepared to transfer to Beaumont for a position as project analyst in the Production Department, reports Plain Talks Correspondent Nina Wiley.

Jordan is shown at right, while Mike Newman, division engineer, displays a cake that featured transmission lines.

## Port Arthur Division completes one year free of accidents

On April 30, the Port Arthur Division had worked one full year without a single losttime accident. Division Vice President Ted Meinscher commended division employees for having attained that safety record.





## Port Arthur Division holds blood drive

Port Arthur Division employees again reached their goal when they held their annual blood drive April 1, reports Plain Talks Correspondent Rose Reeves.

Shown during the drive are (left to right) Tom Clark, supervisor-consumer services, Sandy Flores of the Blood Center and donor D. W. Smith, division substation operator.



## Baton Rouge Division retirees begin planning for retirees' club

The Baton Rouge Division hosted a luncheon meeting on April 23 for about 115 division retirees interested in forming a retirees' club. A similar organization, known as the Sideliners' Club, has been active in the Lake Charles Division for years.

Addressing the gathering was retiree Ken Jumel (pictured above), reports Plain Talks Correspondent George Weathers.

## Live Wires Club announces winners in bass tournament

Fifty-eight teams—a record number—participated in the Live Wires Club Sixth Annual Bass Tournament at Six Mile Marina, Toledo Bend Lake, on April 19, reports Kent DuBose, a Beaumont employee who chaired the event.

Co-chairman was Gene Russell, also of Beaumont.

According to DuBose, 107 fish were weighed, bringing a total weight of 165 pounds and 13 ounces.

The Big Bass trophy went to George Thompson of Silsbee, who caught a five-pound, 10-ounce bass.

Other winners were:

- 1st place, a 19-pound, 10-ounce catch by Beaumont employee Walter Roberts and his partner, Jimmy Smith.

- 2nd place, a 14-pound, 10-ounce catch by Woodville employee James Collier and his partner, Royce Best.

- 3rd place, a 12-pound catch by Beaumont employee Lonnie Stalsby and his partner, Jimmy Busick.

- 4th place, an 11-pound, 10-ounce catch by Beaumont employee David Reynolds and his partner, Gordon Reynolds.

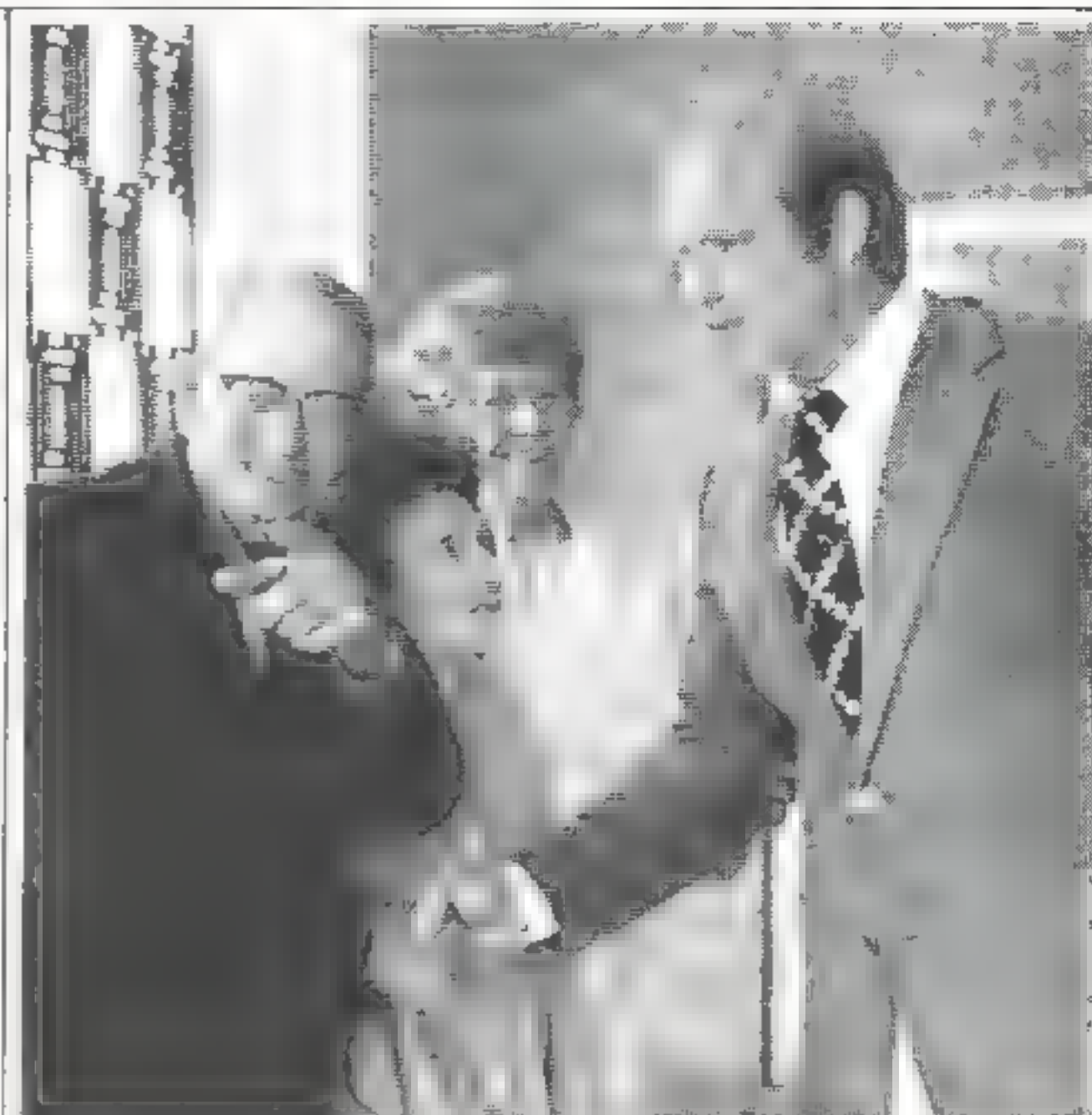
- 5th place, a 10-pound, four-ounce catch by Silsbee employees Mil Cowart and George Thompson.

Following the event, all participants and visitors were treated to a fish fry. According to DuBose, there were entrants from all five of the company's divisions.

## Terry Bradshaw renews ties with GSU family

When Terry Bradshaw came to Lake Charles recently, he visited with the family of John Adams, a consumer service representative with the National Energy Watch Program in the Lake Charles Division.

Adams, who played football with Bradshaw during their college days at Louisiana Tech in Ruston, La., snapped this picture of Bradshaw renewing his acquaintance with



Adams' father, A. A. "Johnnie" Adams, a retired GSU line foreman who was with the company for 42 years. Also shown (left to right) are his grandmother, Mrs. Morgan Smith Sr., and his mother, Harriet Adams.

His parents and his grandmother had met Bradshaw during Adams' college career, and Adams reported that the family found the pro football star to be "still the same old country boy he was 10 years ago at Tech."

According to Adams, who played halfback and ran kick-offs, the team that he and Bradshaw played on won the national championship during Bradshaw's junior year.



## Louisiana retiree bags 18-lb. turkey

Clarence B. Pearson, retired assistant supervisor of contract crews for Baton Rouge Transmission and Distribution, is pictured with the 18-pound turkey he bagged on his farm in Kentwood, La.

Pearson killed the gobbler, which had a 10½-inch beard, on April 5.





## Employee's son named to all-state orchestra

Roger Fox, the son of Roy Fox, a test technician at Neches Station, recently became one of only two second violinists from the Beaumont area to be named to the Texas All-State Orchestra.

He and other members of the orchestra performed in San Antonio in mid-February.

A junior at French High School, Roger also plays in the Beaumont Symphony. He was concert master of the Region X orchestra that performed at Austin Middle School.

The youth is a member of Key Club and the National Honor Society.



## Transferring employees honored in Port Arthur

Kathryn Messina (right) and Max Smith, both of whom were recently transferred to positions in Beaumont, were recently honored by their former co-workers in the Port Arthur Division.

Mrs. Messina now serves as a personnel clerk in Human Resources,

while Smith is coordinator-management reporting system, System Operations.

## Boss of the Year award goes to GSUer's wife

Sona Fay Young, wife of Lake Charles employee Berton Young, was recently named "Boss of the Year" by the West of the Lake Chapter of the American Business Women's Association, reports Plain Talks Correspondent Edith Patterson.

Young is a utility line foreman for the T&D Department, while his wife is district business manager for the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD).

Mrs. Young reportedly is the first woman to receive the award in the 11 years it has been presented by the association.

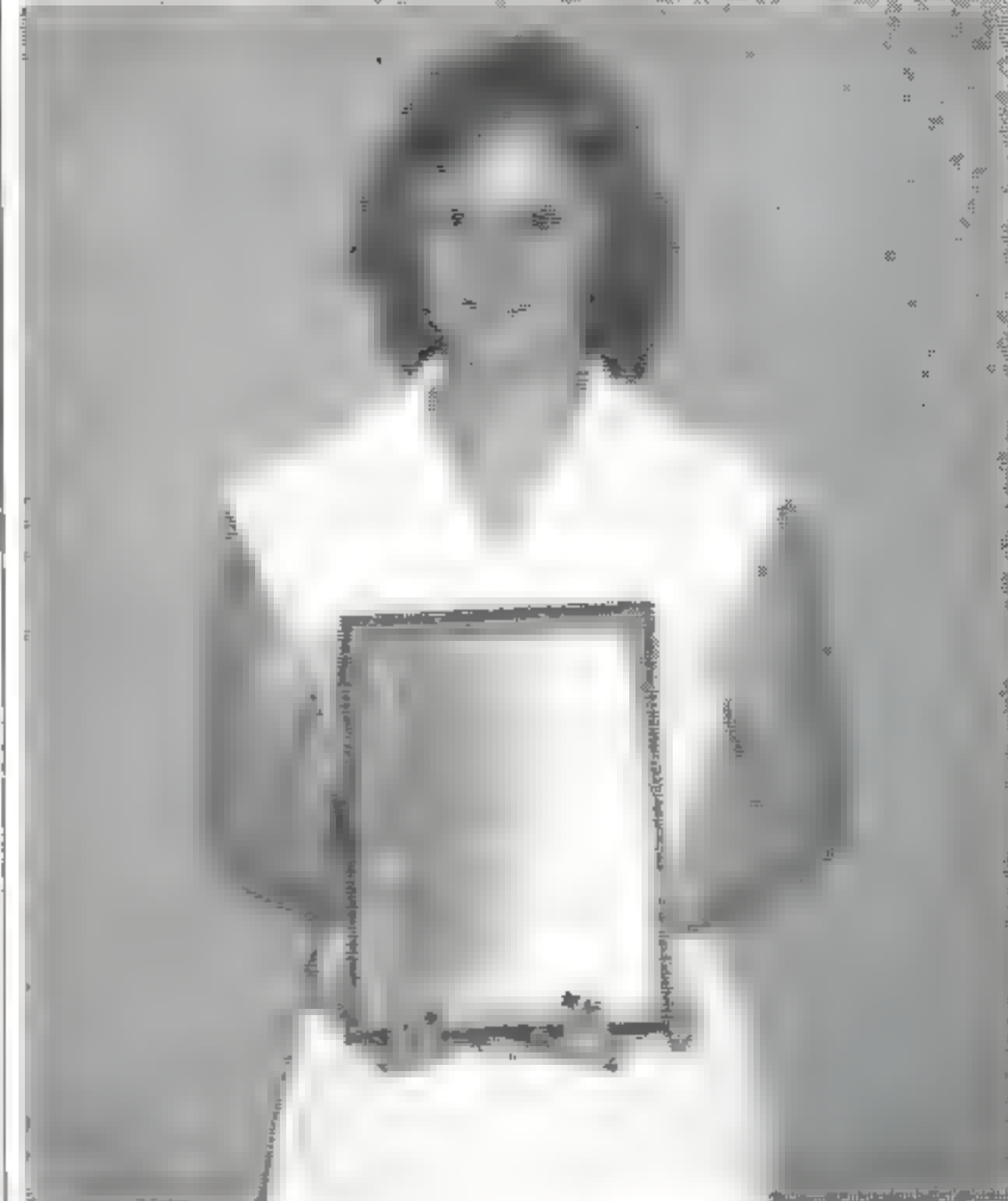
Her duties include directing the accounting activities of a seven-parish district, a job which requires the supervision of 20 employees. A native of West Virginia, she has worked with the DOTD since 1956 and has held her present position since 1975.

## Employee's granddaughter named most photogenic

Jodie Michele Palmer, 2½-year-old granddaughter of Beaumont employee Claude Stracener, recently was named most photogenic in the Petite category of the Miss Imperial Pageant in Longview, Texas.

Jodie's grandparents make their home in Lumberton, while her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Palmer, live in Longview.

Stracener is a serviceman.



## Student employee receives award

Sheila Gouldin, a recent honor graduate of Barbe High School and former student worker for the Lake Charles Division, recently received her school's Scholastic Journalist Award.

On May 20, her Lake Charles co-workers honored her with a graduation party.



## Beaumont employees hold going-away parties for vice president

Les Moor, former vice president of human resources, was honored by his co-workers in late April with two going-away gifts presented to him on April 29.

Moor, who accepted a position with a Houston company, was given matching watercolors by a Beaumont artist. One was presented by a larger group of employees. The second group also gave his wife a gift certificate.

Moor's last day of work with the company was April 30.



# ON THE MOVE

**Alford, Nobie T.**, Beaumont, to senior clerk, Division Accounting Customer Accounts

**Andrus, Gary L.**, Nelson Station, to control operations foreman, Plant Production

**Benedetto, William L.**, Baton Rouge, to director-communications, Baton Rouge Public Affairs

**Black, Sherilyn W.**, Beaumont, to keypunch operator-senior, IDS Operations Services

**Bloomfield, Charles L.**, Port Arthur, to electrician-1st class, Plant Production

**Bourgeois, Kathy L.**, Orange, to engineering helper, T&D Engineering

**Briscoe, Mitchell C.**, Beaumont, to truckdriver, T&D Line Dept

**Bruce, Bennie L.**, Beaumont, to utility truckdriver, T&D Line Dept

**Byrd, Melton D.**, Lake Charles, to assistant general line foreman, T&D Line Dept

**Caldwell, Brian W.**, Beaumont, to senior accountant, Tax and Accounting Research

**Callender, Mark R.**, Beaumont, to engineering assistant, T&D Engineering

**Carrara, John A.**, Beaumont, to supervisor-EDP audits, Internal Audits

**Chamberlain, Sam H.**, Nelson Station, to shift supervisor, Plant Production

**Compton, Billy R.**, Beaumont, to system distribution engineer, Transmission Planning

**Conyers, Jason C.**, Baton Rouge, to repairman-1st class, Plant Production, Willow Glen

**Cowart, Milton E.**, Beaumont, to utility man, T&D Line Dept

**Croft, Ree V.**, Baton Rouge, to engineering helper, T&D Engineering

**Darbonne, David B.**, Baton Rouge, to mechanic helper, Plant Production, Willow Glen

**Davey, Raymond T.**, Beaumont, to electrical engineer, Power Plant Engineering and Design

**DeLahoussaye, Joseph J.**, Beaumont, to director-accounting services, Nelson Coal, Accounting Services

**DeSaw, Leonard W.**, Beaumont, to right-of-way representative, T&D Engineering

**DeWoody, Edgar K.**, Lake Charles, to assistant general line foreman, T&D Line Dept

**Dix, John H., Jr.**, Conroe, to repairman-2nd class, Plant Production

**Doiron, Jack T.**, Beaumont, to inspector-contract crews, T&D Line

**Duhamel, Alfred V.**, Port Arthur, to apprentice, T&D Line Dept

**Duplantis, Douglas G.**, Lake Charles, to garage mechanic-2nd class, Garage

**Duplechin, Warren L.**, Lake Charles, to garage mechanic-2nd class, Garage

**Dykes, Ralph L.**, formerly of Nelson Station, to accountant, Beaumont Accounting Services

**Eickenhorst, Herbert F.**, Conroe, to substation foreman, T&D Substation

**Elter, Terrell G.**, Lake Charles, to lineman-4th class, T&D Line Dept

**Foreman, Thomas A.**, Beaumont, to power system engineer, Power Supply

**Francis, Earnest Jr.**, Port Arthur, to substation mechanic-3rd class, T&D Substation

**Garner, Earl H.**, Toledo Bend Station, to hydro plant supervisor, Plant Production

**Gardiner, Marolon A.**, formerly of Beaumont, to accountant, Plant Production Willow Glen

**Garvin, Earl L.**, Beaumont, to inspector-contract crew, T&D Line

**Gonzalez, Hernan**, Beaumont, to section head, Beaumont Materials Management

**Gracey, LaNelle N.**, Beaumont, to section head, Beaumont Materials Management

**Graham, Michael N.**, Willow Glen, to electrician-1st class, Plant Production

**Gross, Michael L.**, Beaumont, to mechanic helper, Plant Production

**Grove, Rebecca B.**, Lake Charles, to test technician-2nd class, Plant Production

**Guye, Robert G.**, Beaumont, to director-internal audits, Internal Audits

**Harris, Clovis E.**, Sabine Station, to test foreman, Plant Production

**Hay, Doris A.**, Lake Charles, to consumer affairs coordinator, Division Consumer Services

**Hayes, George E.**, Beaumont, to supervisor-engineering services, Engineering Services

**Haynie, Walter K.**, Beaumont, to graphics coordinator, Public Affairs

**Hebert, Clark J.**, Louisiana Station, to mechanical maintenance supervisor, Plant Production

**Hemme, Almedia B.**, Willow Glen, to auxiliary operator, Plant Production

**Hinton, Mary W.**, Beaumont, to draftsman, Engineering Design

**Holston, Robert L.**, Port Arthur, to electrician-2nd class, Plant Production

**Homme, Thor W.**, Port Arthur, to repairman-2nd class, Plant Production

**Humphrey, Mark W.**, Conroe, to apprentice, T&D Line Dept

**Inglehart, James K.**, Conroe, to chief construction inspector, Transmission Construction

**Jackman, David A.**, Conroe, to substation mechanic-1st class, T&D Substation

**Jackson, Andre L.**, Beaumont, to helper, T&D Dept, helper crews

**Jeansonne, Mark C.**, Baton Rouge, to repairman-1st class, Plant Production, Willow Glen

**Jennings, Leonard**, Lake Charles, to lineman-4th class, T&D Line Dept

**Jones, Carl J.**, Lake Charles, to apprentice, T&D Line Dept

**Jones, Charles W.**, New Caney, to superintendent-New Caney, Division Operations

**Jones, Nancy S.**, Beaumont, to keypunch operator-senior, IDS Operations Services

**Jordan, Chris**, Beaumont, to utility worker II, Building Services

**Jordan, Donna E.**, Beaumont, to keypunch operator-senior, IDS Operations Services

**Kautzman, Robert R.**, Beaumont, to coordinator-economic analysis, Fuel Services

**Kelly, James D.**, Orange, to apprentice, T&D Line Dept

**Kettl, Lonnie J.**, Beaumont, to second fireman, Plant Production Operations

**Kinnison, Larwood L.**, Lake Charles, to garage mechanic-1st class, Garage

**Lane, Paul L.**, Beaumont, to section head, T&D Engineering

**Leavins, Kenneth D.**, Lake Charles, engineer transferred to Beaumont Engineering Design

**LeBlanc, Keith A.**, Port Arthur, to lineman-3rd class, T&D Line Dept

**Lefedge, Clarence**, Beaumont, to painter-production, Plant Production

**Lewis, Milton T. III**, Lake Charles, to lineman-3rd class, T&D Line Dept

**Lorling, David N.**, Beaumont, to nuclear engineer, Beaumont Power Plant Engineering and Design

**Mallet, Joel D.**, Port Arthur, to utility foreman, T&D Line

**Manning, Guy V.**, Beaumont, engineer transferred to Beaumont Rates

**Mascarella, Charles R.**, Baton Rouge, to repairman-2nd class, Plant Production, Willow Glen

**Mason, Glenn R.**, Port Arthur, to general foreman, T&D Operations

**Mathews, Edythe S.**, Beaumont, to stenographer-executive, System Engineering

**Matte, Theodore**, Lake Charles, to storeroom foreman, T&D Storeroom

**McKinzie, John W.**, Port Arthur, to repairman-2nd class, Plant Production

**McMurray, Kim R.**, Beaumont, to director-employee information & media services, Public Affairs

**Messina, Kathryn J.**, formerly of Port Arthur, to personnel clerk, Beaumont Human Resources

**Miley, David P.**, Baton Rouge, to lineman-4th class, T&D Line

**Miller, Randell L.**, Lake Charles, to apprentice, T&D Line Dept

**Mitchell, Pauline P.**, Beaumont, to legal stenographer, Legal Services

**Moore, James D. Jr.**, Beaumont, to utility worker II, Building Services

**Moses, Mary J.**, Beaumont, to superintendent-consumer services, Division Consumer Services

**Nantz, Robert L.**, Beaumont, to helper, T&D Dept, helper crews

**Nicholas, Gary W.**, Beaumont, to senior purchasing agent, Materials Management

**Nolen, Doyle R.**, Denham Springs, to apprentice, T&D Line Dept

**Orhoa, James L.**, Beaumont, to repairman-2nd class, Plant Production

**Patton, Lindsey Jr.**, Baton Rouge, to electrician-2nd class, Plant Production, Louisiana Station

**Pavia, Anthony L. III**, Port Arthur, to electrician-1st class, Plant Production

**Perry, Ann S.**, Beaumont, to general clerk, Accounting Services

**Petry, Robert L.**, Beaumont, to director-internal audits, Internal Audits

**Pitts, James H.**, Willow Glen, to control operations foreman, Plant Production

**Poullard, Delores G.**, Beaumont, to test technician-2nd class, Plant Production

**Purdon, Geoffrey D.**, River Bend, to director-planning and performance measurement, River Bend Nuclear Group

**Raven, Matthew M.**, Beaumont, to planning analyst, Corporate Planning

**Raybourn, James E.**, Willow Glen, to repairman-2nd class, Plant Production

**Reed, Ross**, formerly of New Caney, to inspector-contract crews, Conroe T&D Line

**Reed, Johnnie L.**, Port Arthur, to repairman-1st class, Plant Production

**Riley, David F.**, Beaumont, to financial analyst, Financial Services

**Roberts, Craig L.**, Willow Glen, to test technician-2nd class, Plant Production

**Rogers, David L.**, Beaumont, to director-budgeting and control, Accounting Services

**Royer, Atwood M.**, Nelson Station, to control operations foreman, Plant Production

**Saale, David J.**, Port Allen, to apprentice, T&D Line Dept

**Sanco, Joseph H.**, Beaumont, to mechanic helper, Plant Production

**Sanders, James H.**, Beaumont, to inspector-contract crews, T&D Line Dept

**Sandidge, Louis C.**, Navasota, to superintendent-Navasota District, Division Operations

**Saunders, Charles I.**, Beaumont, to supervisor-system meter group, System Operations

**Sellers, Robert L.**, Sabine Station, to shift supervisor, Plant Production

**Seymour, David G.**, Beaumont, to personnel administrator, Human Resources

**Shaw, Darrell L.**, Conroe, to lineman-4th class, T&D Line

**Sheffield, Robert A.**, formerly of Beaumont, to superintendent-Northern District, Silsbee Division Operations

**Shimek, Charles R.**, Beaumont, to application engineer, Engineering Design

**Simmons, Russell B.**, Beaumont, to mechanical engineer, Power PLANT Engineering and Design

**Simms, Harrison**, Beaumont, to storekeeper, Office Services

**Smith, Derrick D.**, Nelson Station, to supervisor-start up and test, Plant Production, Nelson Coal Plant

**Smith, Philip R.**, Beaumont, to director-business systems, Accounting Services

**Smith, Mary R.**, Beaumont, to stenographer, River Bend Nuclear Group

**Smith, Max L.**, Beaumont, to coordinator-management reporting system, System Operations

**Smythia, David L.**, Beaumont, to electrical engineer, Power Plant Engineering and Design

**Snow, Raymond**, Conroe, to utility foreman, Conroe T&D Substation

**Sobczak, Gary J.**, Beaumont, to senior accountant, Accounting Services

**Stephenson, Marion D.**, Beaumont, to meter foreman, T&D Meter

**Stirling, Thomas R.**, Beaumont, to director-business development, System Consumer Services

**Stone, Robert C.**, Conroe, to relayman-2nd class, T&D Relay

**Storch, Donald D.**, Port Arthur, to apprentice, T&D Line Dept

**Strayer, Edwin L.**, Beaumont, to supervisor-cost, River Bend Nuclear Group



# SERVICE AWARDS

**30**  
Years



**Nelson  
Alexander Jr.**  
Plant Production  
Baton Rouge



**James N.  
Lee**  
Electric T&D  
Jennings



**Jackie L.  
Powdrill**  
Engineering Design  
Beaumont



**James A.  
Richardson**  
Consumer Services  
Lake Charles



**Harrison  
Simms**  
Office Services  
Beaumont

**20**  
Years



**Robert G.  
Chapman**  
Fossil Projects  
Beaumont



**Clifton  
Etienne**  
Electric T&D  
Lake Charles



**Limuel H.  
Jackson**  
Gas Dept.  
Baton Rouge



**Rosalie C.  
James**  
Accounting  
Lake Charles



**Geoffrey D.  
Purdon Jr.**  
Nuclear Projects  
River Bend

**10**  
Years



**Ronald M.  
Carlin**  
Accounting  
Port Arthur



**Joseph F.  
Domino**  
Plant Production  
Port Arthur



**Thomas G.  
Weeks**  
Electric T&D  
Silsbee



## Oil, gas prices make hydropower look even better

After 50 years of operation, the original federal operating license for a hydroelectric dam in Safe Harbor, Pa., came up for renewal in April, and its owners reportedly were seeking not only to keep it operating, but to nearly double its capacity.

According to an article in the *National Journal*, spring runoff was raising the Susquehanna River in the lake behind Safe Harbor Dam, forcing operators to "spill" water in dramatic, but unproductive, cascades. To tap that wasted resource, operators proposed to add five more turbines to the seven already in operation.

The publication quoted Donald B. Chubb, president of the Safe Harbor Water Power Corp., which owns the dam, as saying, "With the price of oil going where it is, the economics favoring additional hydro here are compelling. At this facility, we can produce electricity for 3.5 mills per kilowatthour. The most likely alternative is a gas turbine, which can cost up to 10 cents a kilowatthour."

Safe Harbor Dam, the article noted, is used chiefly to provide "peak load" power, the extra electricity needed only at certain times of day. When it is used for generating "base load" power for normal demand, the cost comparison with coal and nuclear plants is favorable, but less dramatic, the article explained.

Even so, the cost and availability of hydropower apparently are appealing enough to result in a record number of applications—more than 250—before the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) for new, expanded and rehabilitated generating facilities. The applications range from plants that can generate 12 kilowatts for individual use to projects of 572 megawatts for large utilities. Together, they represent more than 17,000 megawatts of generating capacity, according to the article.

## Consumers establish energy cooperatives

Just as consumers have sometimes formed cooperatively-owned food stores, health clinics and housing developments, so they have begun to establish energy co-ops to combat high prices and shortages of fuel, reports the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE).

The co-op movement got a push this spring with establishment of a new federal bank in Washington, D.C. that will make loans to local groups that want to establish co-ops in any of several fields. In addition, special guidance in forming co-ops to deal with energy problems is being offered by the Conference on Alternative State and Local Policies—a Washington-based association.

An energy co-op has the potential for saving money for members by offering such services as bulk purchasing of fuel, non-profit maintenance and repair of furnaces and boilers and installation of insulation and storm windows.

The bank offers low-interest loans to new or existing co-ops, with emphasis given to those that serve low-income families.

In the sense that such co-ops would be managed by consumers, they would be following in the footsteps of the Rural Electric Cooperatives that have brought electric service to about 30 million persons who were beyond the reach of utilities.

Co-ops already getting organized range from bulk fuel purchasing co-ops in New York and Philadelphia to wood production and purchasing co-ops in Maine and a weatherization co-op in Ann Arbor, Mich.

The National Consumer Co-op Bank's initial role is to provide federally-backed loans to help start the new co-ops. Eventually, federal involvement will be phased out and the bank will be wholly owned and operated by the co-ops that it helps establish.





## Congress should limit coal severance taxes

Unless Congress intervenes, GSU customers eventually will be paying millions of dollars in taxes to the state of Wyoming, which has joined with Montana to take undue advantage of federal mandates that require electric utilities to use more coal and less gas and oil.

Wyoming currently levies a 17 percent severance tax on each ton of coal that leaves the state. In 1978, Texas consumers paid \$35.8 million for Wyoming coal that was used to make electricity and another \$6 million in severance taxes that went into the state's coffers.

Severance taxes aren't exclusive to Wyoming and Montana, of course, but no state has levies that are nearly as high as theirs. Montana, which has about one-fourth of the nation's coal reserves, has a 30 percent tax. In contrast, Texas places a 7.5 percent severance tax on its natural gas and 4.6 percent on oil. Louisiana's taxes are 12.5 percent on the gross value of oil and 7 percent per 1,000 cubic feet for natural gas.

Although GSU won't begin transporting coal until the fall of 1981, the company already has an agreement that will provide it with 2.5 million tons of Wyoming coal annually for 20 years. By 1985, it is anticipated that 4 million tons a year will be under contract for use at the company's Nelson generating station near Lake Charles.

At today's coal prices, GSU customers will be providing the state of Wyoming with about \$3 million in taxes each year the company obtains 2.5 million tons. When the total goes to 4 million tons, the tax bite for GSU customers will jump to nearly \$5 million a year. (And that's only if neither coal prices nor severance taxes go up. The governor of Wyoming said in March that he would seek a

severance tax hike next January.)

That means that over the life of GSU's contract the company's customers would pay more than \$100 million in taxes to the state of Wyoming.

Other nearby utilities face even bleaker prospects. According to Texas Attorney General Mark White, Houston Lighting & Power ratepayers will send half a billion dollars to the Montana treasury over a 25-year period unless the severance tax rate is lowered.

Coal-consuming states have become so angered over the high severance taxes that they have formed an organization which is trying to persuade Congress to step into the dispute.

The National Coal Consumers Alliance (NCAA) is supporting legislation that would impose a 12.5 percent ceiling on severance taxes. Principal sponsor of H.R. 6625 is Representative Philip Sharp of Indiana. Among the cosponsors are Representatives John Breaux, Jerry Huckaby and Claude Leach of Louisiana, and Phil Gramm, Mickey Leland, J.J. Pickle, Tom Loeffler, Kent Hance, Charles Stenholm, Jim Collins and Martin Frost of Texas.

Minneapolis Mayor Don Fraser, chairman of the NCCA steering committee, said that Montana collected about \$40 million on coal produced in 1978 and Wyoming collected more than \$66 million.

If the tax had been at 12.5 percent, the revenue would have amounted to \$16.6 million for Montana and \$48.5 million for Wyoming, totals which Fraser calls "more than fair for the states and a savings for the American consumer of more than \$41 million."

If the Wyoming tax were 12.5 percent, GSU customers would pay about \$2 million a year in taxes (instead of \$3 million) for 2.5 million tons and about \$3.5 million (instead of \$5 million)

when the company's annual total went to 4 million tons.

Representative Gramm, who is from College Station, said that if Texas had a 30 percent severance tax on its oil and gas, American consumers would have paid a staggering \$21.8 billion.

W. Donham Crawford, GSU chairman of the board, said that congressional action is justified because the lawmakers are forcing electric utilities to convert their generating facilities to coal.

"These states didn't impose their excessive taxes until Congress took steps to force the increased use of coal," Crawford points out. "When Wyoming and Montana saw that coal would be a key fuel for the future and that they had a virtual monopoly on it, they started making American consumers pay the price."

Crawford said he would prefer to see the states' legislatures recognize the unfairness of the severance taxes and reduce them voluntarily. "But if that does not happen, and there is no sign that it will, the only other way to bring about equitable taxation is for Congress to act," the GSU chairman added.

The 12.5 percent figure was chosen because that is the highest severance tax imposed by any other state.

by Kim McMurray



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